FORGIVE THEM

We live in a world turned upside down by events that change the course of our lives. Yvonne and I deal with this and the general turmoil of prison life and prison problems. In our last TWO newsletter you have been reading an article written by Don Hawkins on Death row in Oklahoma. I am happy to say the article Ten Months to Live has gotten a lot of folks looking at their Bibles. That ten months may be much shorter, as Don Hawkins' appeal was turned down.

I have been asked to appear before the Clemency Board—the final appeal as to whether he lives or dies. This board has 5 members; I was on staff at the time of the crime so only four will attend. Don's attorney is given 40 minutes to present a case that would give clemency. The Chaplain and staff of the prison are not allowed to speak for Don.

His life or death will be decided in those 40 minutes. Since Yvonne and I have been a part of his life for the last eighteen years, we will take the bulk of time. I am going to ask for the Board to ask the living family members to let Don speak to them, as I truly believe this son of God will show the true remorse he has. (Don took a woman from a parking for ransom; her two daughters were let go.) The attorney cannot locate them. Please pray that God's will be done. I have told Don that for his crimes the old Don did deserve to die. But the born-again, regenerated Don Hawkins can do so much good given life in prison. Actually, dead is better than that. If he is not given Clemency, he will die. Yvonne and I will spend time before the execution with him, and after I will do a service for him. Most of you who know us or of us also know for over twenty years we spent working with the worst of the worst.

Don, before Jesus, was one of the worst of these. He is a classic example of what happens when a person really changes. Not jail—house religion, but true conversion. His insight on God's word is more than amazing, showing that with just the Sword of The Lord a person can get educated, changed, and help others change. Don is not a bit scared of death or dying. He knows about that twinkle of an eye. He will walk into that death chamber, if all fails, a hulk of a man, tattoos all over. But when we see him in Heaven all will have changed.

I had a dream the other night, just a dream. Don walked over to the tree of life and said to a woman, “The old me killed you, and I ask you to forgive me.” She stood and kissed his cheek. But we all know that all this will not go to heaven with us and old things will pass...
away. Just a dream.

A CHANCE TO HEAR

Lonnie Melashenko, Speaker-Director of Voice Of Prophecy and I are going to the McAlester Prison in March to do a radio interview with Don, this you are all going to want to hear. It will be broadcast world wide at a later date and we will inform you how to get a copy. Don will be taken to a glassed room in shackles and we will do the whole show over a phone as the glass will remain between us. The prison is going to have Don miked so it will be clear. These trips to Oklahoma are going to be a bit expensive so donations for this project are really needed. Also Don Hawkins has written two books that I truly believe every Christian should read. If you are interested we will work out something to get them to you. Don does not wish to sell them.

When you hear or read about this man you will see God forgives. The transformation of this man will be felt as you listen. Forty inmates on Death row in Oklahoma have written letters to spare Don because of what he has done for them. What about the 40? I am going to ask Lonnie to write of his experience on Death row in our next News Letter.

Spring is near Yvonne and I are looking for speaking engagements, especially if near us.

OUR CALIFORNIA FRIENDS

This ministry started in California and many roots are still in our hearts there. Also the interest of our friends there. I just read an article talking about the Illinois Governor’s program to empty Death Row with out killing anyone. Now we read that California’s Governor wants to spend $220 Million(!) to build a special death row at San Quentin. Staring with 68 inmates many years ago, it now has 604. The prison is falling apart after millions spent already.

The Department of Corrections budget for 2003 is $5.27 Billion. Why not do as planned and save tax payers money and move Death Row to Corcoran? Why invest $5.27 Billion on warehousing men and women with little or no chance to rehabilitate or regenerate? Why build more prisons than schools? The corrections union wants this to happen, but do the tax payers? We spent over two years working with Harry Howard at San Quentin and believe me, it is not a state-of-the art prison. California once voted to do away with the death penalty and capitol crime went down. We send inmates to prison for punishment not as punishment. Please pray for the dedicated volunteers who go into these hell holes to try to save the truly lost. When we all get to heaven what a joy that will be, when we all see Jesus!

NUTS AND BOLTS

If you write your inmates for awhile and then get no answer, write the Chaplain c/o their address to see if the inmate is still there. We cannot keep up with the movement. Also due to the sate of the Nation, many are releasing inmates early due to budget cuts. If you have
the name and number, call the Department of Corrections in the Capitol of the State and ask for the inmate locator. Packages are also a problem. A woman sent a package to her Pen Friend through us. Where it went we know not. It really is better to send a Money order or somehow mail direct with our return.

**YVONNE’S CORNER**

I would like to thank each of you who have written in Don Hawkins’ behalf and also those of you who have written to him over the years: Jan Judd, and Dr. & Mrs. Everett Graybill, and many more that I can't remember your names, each of you planted a seed that grew. Now he has become a wonderful Christian that each of you would be proud of.

Just last week I received the most beautiful hand-crocheted centerpiece for my dining room table. It is so pretty, Don Hawkins made it for me, it must have taken hours, on it he put Blue Roses. I love flowers and especially roses, but these are special for many reasons but Blue for a Blue lady, we love him because Christ loves us, it is so simple. He has been in our prayers daily since we first received his letter many years ago. I pray for all those that we come in contact with, you never know what God will do.

It is so important for us to see and meet people where they are not where we are. Remember, God does not see us as we used to be. He does not see us as we are. But God does see us as we will be, through the shed blood of Jesus on the cross for each one of us. My Prayer is that each of us as Christians will try to look at others as Christ would if when he walked this earth, and not find fault but look for something good in each person we meet or come in contact with.

**THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO**

Some of you get a little upset when we spend time on certain men and women. I have no use for crime or the criminal, even though I was one. God's Word points out what we as Christians are chosen to do. He chose me, then Yvonne and then many of you to minister in prison. We take what we do as Jesus would want us to do. Even I get bit. Many years ago in the bowels of San Quentin I met a man. God put a bond between us and our friendship grew. I then found out why he was in prison and was so repulsed I stopped seeing the man. He killed himself. I judged and it really cost me, took awhile to forgive myself.

Maybe 50% of the inmates we send to you will never make it. They may use you but don’t stop trying, or just stop writing. Out of the Tree of Life I just pulled a plum—Don. I was told, when talking about men like Tex Watson and Ted Bundy, not to bother with such trash. HE WEPT. Jesus wept for such as these. He must often think, How soon will they learn?”

**WORLD AT WAR**

This we are heading in two directions and war could happen. What we could only save in
dollars if we let trained veterans out of prison to fight for a country they still belong to. Having been in Korea, I can say “Not again, please!

We are told "Judge not lest ye be judged, then we are told rebuke publicly so others will fear. It is hard to see men who the country really has turned its back on willing to fight for it. Almost as hard as it is to see Christians neither hearing or doing God's word.

Someone Cares Home Page